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A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE VISITATION

OF

THE HON. AND RT. REVEREND

THE

LORD BISHOP OF ELY,

AT CAMBRIDGE,

JUNE the 12th, 1799.

BY

THE REV. JOHN HAGGITT, B. D.

FELLOW OF CLARE HALL

AND

VICAR OF MADINGLEY.

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1800.

TO

THE HON. AND RT. REVEREND

THE

LORD BISHOP OF ELY,

AND

The CLERGY who were preſent

At his LORDSHIP's Viſitation at CAMBRIDGE,

the 12th of JUNE, 1799;

The following DISCOURSE

IS

Reſpectfully Addreſſed,

By their obedient and faithful Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

CLARE HALL,
Dec. 9th, 1799.

PREFACE.

IT is not unuſual to hear exceptions made, on various grounds, to the publication of a *ſingle diſcourſe*. It ſeems difficult however, to aſſign a ſufficient reaſon for theſe exceptions, while much may be alledged in reply to them.

Single diſcourſes, which are ſubmitted to the preſs, having in general been written for particular occaſions; to be preached before ſelect, ſometimes before learned, audiences; there is reaſon to ſuppoſe that more than common pains may have been taken in their compoſition: an opportunity moreover is given on ſuch occaſions for treating many

ſubjects

ſubjects of conſiderable importance to the intereſts of Religion, which could not with propriety be introduced before a mixed Congregation.

Of this nature may be conſidered all reflections on the Clergy, as a body; reflections on the mode of performing Divine Service, as appointed by law and ſanctioned by long practice; with whatever relates to the doctrine, diſcipline or uſages of the eſtabliſhed Church: and if any one of theſe ſubjects ſhould have been treated apparently to the ſatisfaction of his audience and the Preacher find on further inquiry that he is not ſingular in his notion of its importance; there can it is preſumed be no particular vanity, in endeavouring to call a more general attention to what muſt be of equal concern to every Miniſter of the Goſpel, as to thoſe of the Dioceſe to which he may happen to belong. On theſe conſiderations, the following Diſcourſe

is

is reſpectfully offered to the attention of the Clergy of our Eſtabliſhment, in hopes that ſome one of them may be induced to give a more methodical and detailed reply, to the accuſations which are there briefly conſidered; accuſations which ſo far from having ſubſided by forbearance, have arrived at a pitch that ſhould excite the vigilance, and call forth the abilities of all who are concerned for the welfare of Religion.

It is ſaid that thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves by the excluſive appellation of *Goſpel Preachers*, are encouraged and patronized by perſons of ſome diſtinction and influence in the world and of moſt reſpectable private character—if this be true, we would ſubmit the following conſideration to the unprejudiced judgement of theſe Patrons.*

Can

* I might here mention the very great evil which muſt reſult to Religion, from the encouragement given to ſchiſmatical

Can any poſſible good reſult from the unremitted attacks from the pulpits of theſe ſelf named Goſpel Preachers, upon their Brethren of the eſtabliſhed Church? What is the motive, and what muſt be the neceſſary effect of ſuch attacks? The motive, it will be ſaid, is to induce the eſtabliſhed Church to change their mode of preaching: that is to ſay, they are to be frightened into it, and indeed, as I ſhall preſently ſhew, there is ſome cauſe for alarm.

and irregular Preachers, by men filling important ſtations in life; but this ſubject has been ſo ably and ſo fully treated by Mr. Daubeny, that I ſhall by no means intrude upon it; and indeed my object is to confine myſelf to the *anſwer* of accuſations, rather than to make any that are not neceſſarily connected with that object; and in ſo doing to ſhew, that no poſſible blame can attach to the Eſtabliſhed Clergy, for adhering to the ſubjects and mode of preaching which they found ſanctioned by the authority of every name moſt venerable in the Church at their entrance into the Miniſtry; had Calviniſm then been the general word, as it is with this newly revived Sect, many who are now Miniſters of the Church of England would indiſputably have betaken themſelves to other Profeſſions—but happily as Calviniſm was not then admitted to be the national faith, ſo neither is it now; as we could eſtabliſh by the moſt valuable authority did we judge it neceſſary.

But

But what is this *change* which is ſo imperiouſly demanded?

In the year 1790, a charge was addreſſed by a learned Prelate to his Clergy in the weſt on the ſubject of moral preaching, in which much ſtrength of argument and language was employed to ſhew the neceſſity of enforcing the Doctrinal Points of Chriſtianity, which his Lordſhip was of opinion, were not ſufficiently inſiſted upon by many of the Clergy. Such a ſubject was well adapted to the occaſion of that meeting, and it has ſince been urged by other diſtinguiſhed Prelates at ſimilar times. But what! Have the Clergy to whom theſe Charges were addreſſed, proved incorrigible? Such of them I mean as the admonition affected; is it proved that they erred with their eyes open, that they have knowingly and maliciouſly thruſt from their ſermons the peculiar doctrines of Chriſtianity? No

ſuch thing has ever been hinted at, or imagined, but by theſe Goſpel Preachers and their adherents.

If good works have not on all occaſions been united in a manner ſufficiently plain and preciſe, with the principles of the Goſpel, it well became the appointed Guardians of the Church to notice the omiſſion. But little could they have expected, that under the pretended plea of their authority, *their Clergy* would ever be inſultingly held forth through the Towns and Cities of this Realm, as Apoſtates from Chriſtianity. We do not *abuſe* theſe men, ſay our Goſpel Preachers, No, we only affirm that they do not preach the Goſpel, that they know nothing of Chriſtianity. The fact is, we may inſiſt upon faith in Chriſt, upon the attonement of Chriſt, and every other doctrine of Chriſtianity as much as we pleaſe, but if we do not ſee exactly in the ſame light that they do their favourite notions

of

of *faith* and *election* (which God forbid we ever ſhould) their language will ſtill be—hic niger eſt, hunc tu Romane caveto.

But I ſaid that theſe attacks upon the eſtabliſhed Clergy, are a cauſe of alarm: the grounds for this alarm I ſhall merely ſtate and leave them to the judgement of my readers. The number of Churches and Chapels in London and in its neighbourhood, that are in poſſeſſion of theſe pretended Goſpel Preachers, is, we are ſorry to ſtate, beginning to be very conſiderable; neither money nor pains are ſpared to ſecure this object, and wherever they eſtabliſh themſelves, particularly in the outſkirts of the Town, they are inſtantly followed by multitudes of the loweſt orders of the community. Their doctrines are of too tempting a nature for it to be otherwiſe. But I would aſk, what muſt be the effect, the *neceſſary* effect, of a ſyſtematic attack upon the doctrines of the eſtabliſhed Clergy moſt

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inſidiouſly intruded upon ſuch audiences. Can they poſſibly be diſpaſſionate, fair, or in any ſhape proper Umpires in ſuch a cauſe? No! But a compariſon may be dextrouſly inſinuated, by which they will return home convinced that their regular paſtor is no better than a Heathen, or a Knave, probably that he is both one and the other.

The uſes that may, and have been made, of ignorance thus perverted are obvious. Indeed the doctrines ſubſtituted by this reproachful ſect in the place of decried morality affect in an equal degree the temporal and eternal welfare of the Community. It would take up too much time, and cannot be neceſſary here, to dwell upon poſitions ſo horrid and ſo ſtrange, that when we ſee them authoriſed by the names of grave, reſpectable characters, we are ready to reject the atteſtation of our own ſenſes; of this nature ſurely is the doctrine of partial election, and that

pregnant

pregnant with every crime, which repreſents the Elect as incapable of Sin, or to uſe their own explanation, though the Sin be diſpleaſing, yet is the perſon of the ſinner not the leſs acceptable to the Almighty; an idea not only moſt ſhocking to our moral feelings, not only at direct variance with the univerſal tenor of ſcripture, but utterly ſubverſive of the firſt principles of civilized ſociety, which refer to the Deity as the Remunerator of good and evil, that at the laſt day men ſhall be judged according to their works. In a word, of the doctrine of unconditional Election, the obvious effect is to cut aſunder the bonds of all moral obligation, and to put every man's life and property at the mercy of every fanatical Audience. Yet is it for the ſake and by means of this very doctrine, together with that kindred inſinuation of Faith being all in all, that a dangerous and widely ſpreading ſchiſm has been introduced

into

into the Church, that her Clergy is traduced and maligned, and that every petty mode which ingenious fanaticiſm can deviſe, is employed to ſeduce the Flock of Chriſt, from the care of its regular and appointed Paſtors.

If I have treſpaſſed too long upon the patience of my readers, the importance of my ſubject will, I truſt, carry ſome excuſe with it; and it is undoubtedly good that the Church ſhould be as generally as poſſible aware both of the ſpirit of the Enemy which has commenced this unwarrantable attack upon its peace, and alſo of the nature of his weapons; that this knowledge may ſuggeſt to every clergyman, according to his ſituation, abilities and judgement, ſome ſpeedy and effectual mode of counteracting the poiſon of this reſtleſs and criminating Sect, is the earneſt wiſh and prayer of the Writer of the following diſcourſe.

A SER-

A

SERMON.

II. Tim. 2. xv.

Study to ſhew thyſelf approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

It is remarked by thoſe who have conſidered the hiſtory of Mankind with attention, that it has been found at all times, no leſs expedient to guard againſt the ſpecious refinements of the *Well-meaning*, than the more practical deſigns of the *openly Miſchievous*.

At a period, indeed, in which the reſtleſs ſpirit of Innovation, has confeſſedly been productive of ſo much intolerable evil, ſome ſhort reſpite might have been expected from the de-

luſions of Theory; amongſt ourſelves at leaſt, where ſo many bleſſings ſtill remain, and where comparative happineſs ſtill ranks ſo high, no caution, no dread of unforeſeen conſequences, could ſurely have been conſidered as *exceſſive.*

But it is the misfortune of the Age we live in, that Experience and Example, ſeem no longer to retain their due influence on the human mind, and that principles which have involved Millions in utter ruin, are ſtill reſorted to as reſtoratives of ſovereign force and efficacy. Witneſs the innumerable Publications which continue to diſgrace our Preſs, where the baleful Noſtrum "of the Rights of Men," notwithſtanding the bitter fruit that it *has* produced, and ever *muſt* produce, is ſtill ſhameleſsly held out, as alone worthy of acceptance. But with the attempts of the *manifeſt* diſturbers of ſociety, it is not my intention to interfere; the ſubject on which I propoſe to addreſs you, is of a different nature, in which *You* are more immediately concerned, and though it cannot ſtrictly ſpeaking be termed an innovation, yet may its preſent threatning aſpect, juſtly authoriſe us to conſider it in that queſtionable light.

It cannot then have eſcaped your notice how much it has of late been the *faſhion,* for I muſt be permitted ſo to term it, to reflect upon the Clergy of the Eſtabliſhed Church, as *defective*

tive Preachers of the Goſpel——nay, there are not wanting thoſe, who have proceeded ſtill further, and at once boldly pronounced, that the great Body of the Clergy, *do not preach the Goſpel.* This is indeed a heavy charge, whether it be a juſt one, is a queſtion which ſhould be ſolemnly and maturely weighed by every Individual of our ſacred calling.

I account it my honour to belong, with you, to one of the moſt unexceptionable Church Eſtabliſhments of the World, and I cannot but deeply feel the wound which is thus aimed at her Public Miniſters. Availing ourſelves then, we conceive with ſtrict propriety, of the preſent occaſion; perſuaded, further, that neither Scripture, nor the voice of Conſcience, nor of Chriſtian Charity forbid, but on the contrary that all ſtrongly prompt our *reply* to an accuſation which we deem unjuſt in itſelf, and dangerous in its tendency; *on theſe grounds*, permit me moſt earneſtly to entreat your attention, while I endeavour to recall to your minds ſuch an anſwer as may without breach of charity be given to our Accuſers.

If there be any here who think the examination I am about to enter upon unneceſſary, let me conjure them to remember that the accuſation *againſt us* has been urged both from the Pulpit and the Preſs with peculiar warmth

and induſtry, that ſilence under ſo heavy a charge would not fail to be conſtrued into a conviction of its juſtice; that if all *who hold the* Chriſtian faith are enjoined to be ready to give a reaſon of that faith, ſtill more neceſſary is it that the Chriſtian *Teacher* ſhould be prepared to give a ſatisfactory account of the doctrine he inculcates, and that *one good* at leaſt may be anſwered by the moſt *defective* attempt on my part, that of exciting ſome one of zeal and talents requiſite to compleat the plan, of which I only pretend to offer you a faint ſketch.

The principal charge alledged againſt the Clergy of the Eſtabliſhed Church is, that they preach *Pagan Morality*, to the *excluſion* of the peculiar Doctrines of Chriſtianity. On ſtripping this accuſation of its calumniatory cloathing, if I am not greatly miſtaken, the caſe really ſtands thus: that the Clergy of the Eſtabliſhment are conſidered as more zealous in recommending to their Congregations the doctrine of good works, than that of Juſtification by Faith. Without entering upon a boundleſs field of controverſy, I ſhall proceed to offer ſome obſervations which they who make this charge, do not ſeem to have conſidered with due attention.

That good works are not to be undervalued, beſides appealing to the univerſal tenor of the ſcriptures, (ſo univerſal, and ſo plain, that nothing

thing but the utmoſt wilful perverſeneſs can miſtake,) I ſhall yet further beg leave to ſhew, by citing ſome particular paſſages for your conſideration; and here the only difficulty is, to ſelect with judgment from the infinite numbers that preſent themſelves. The ſermon of our bleſſed Saviour on the mount, which indeed from the very beginning to the end is an inculcation of good works, among others to the ſame purpoſe, has the following moſt expreſs declaration. "For verily I ſay unto you, till heaven "and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no "wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled. "Whoſoever therefore ſhall break one of theſe "leaſt commandments and ſhall teach men ſo, "he ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of "Heaven; but whoſoever *ſhall do and teach* "*them*, the ſame ſhall be called *great* in the "kingdom of Heaven" If there were no other paſſage in the whole Scripture to the ſame effect, we ſhould need no apology for *preſſing*, *earneſtly preſſing*, *unceaſingly preſſing* upon our Flock, the neceſſity of good works. The prize annexed cannot be gainſaid, nor can any ſophiſtical modes of argument annul the conditions of it.

I know it may be aſſerted that I am engaging againſt a ſhadow, and that the neceſſity of good works *has* in fact never been called in queſtion; but I beg leave to premiſe that I have

have not ſet out without well conſidering the value of this aſſertion and that I ſhall ſpeak to it in proper time—another paſſage in the Goſpel of St. Matthew, is well worthy of being adduced on this occaſion, its ſimplicity and preciſion muſt deeply fix it in every candid mind.

" And behold one came and ſaid to him, " Good Maſter, what good thing ſhall I do, that " I may have *eternal life*." And he ſaid to him, " Why calleſt thou me good, there is none good " but one, that is God: *but if thou wilt enter* " *into life keep the commandments:*" he ſaith unto " him, which? Jeſus ſaid, " Thou ſhall do no " murder: thou ſhalt not commit adultery: " thou ſhalt not ſteal: thou ſhalt not bear " falſe witneſs: honour thy father and thy mo- " ther and thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as " thyſelf. And the young man ſaith to him, " all theſe things have I kept from my youth " up, what lack I yet?" Jeſus ſaith to him,— or as St. Mark in the parallel paſſage expreſſes it, —" Jeſus then beholding him loved him, and " ſaith to him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and " ſell what thou haſt and give to the poor and " thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven, and come " and follow me".

It ſhould ſeem as if all comment on this paſſage were ſuperfluous, the general impreſſion of the high value and indiſpenſable neceſſity of good

good works is too ſtrong to be denied; they are repreſented *as the way to eternal life* and as attracting the regard of the Lord of life, " then Jeſus beholding him loved him". Nor can it with any colour of reaſon be urged, that faith in Chriſt, which may be repreſented as ſubſequent to this anſwer of his, did therefore ſuperſede and annul the obligations of the moral law, ſince we have but juſt ſeen him meaſure its duration by that of the Univerſe, " till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tit-" tle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law". A ſhort obſervation of the judicious and learned Dr. Whitby is however too valuable to be omitted on this point: " if thou will enter into life keep the commandments". this, ſays that Commentator, being Chriſt's anſwer to the young Man's queſtion " what good thing ſhall " I do that I may inherit eternal life". ' I can-' not think as many ſeem to do, that Chriſt ' here directs him to that way to obtain that ' life, which neither was, nor could be ſuffici-' ent for that end: it being certain that Chriſt ' elſewhere ſaith the ſame thing, for to the ' Lawyer inquiring what ſhall I do to inherit ' eternal life? Chriſt anſwers, " thou ſhalt love " the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy " neighbour as thyſelf, this do and thou ſhalt " live". ' Now when men came ſeriouſly to en-

' quire

' quire of him the way to eternal life, who can
' imagine he would deceive them by directing
' them to a way, which he well knew was not
' ſufficient to obtain that end'. ſuch is the annotation of a writer whoſe labours and authority it will be found no eaſy matter to diſparage. Still further to the ſame purpoſe, permit me to cite the following ſhort paſſages: In the fifth chapter of St. John are theſe words of our Saviour, " The hour is coming in the which all " that are in their graves ſhall hear my voice " and ſhall come forth, they that have *done good* " unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have " *done evil* unto the reſurrection of damnation:

In the ſeventh chapter of St. Matthew, ſpeaking of the ſame day, he ſays, " Depart from me " ye *Workers* of Iniquity", in the thirteenth, " The Son of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels " and they ſhall gather out of his kingdom all " things that offend, and them which *do* iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a furnace of " fire ": and again in the ſixteenth chapter, " For the Son of Man ſhall come in the glory of " his Father with his Angels, and then he ſhall " reward every Man *according to his works*".

The aſſembly I am particularly addreſſing, are too well acquainted with the general Spirit of the ſacred Writings, and with the innumerable paſſages that I might ſtill bring forward to the

ſame

ſame effect, to make it neceſſary to take up more of their time on this head—one word however. I ſhall beg to add from the epiſtle of St. James, " True Religion and undefiled, before God " the Father, (ſaith the Apoſtle,) is this, to viſit " the Fatherleſs and Widows in their affliction, " and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the " world".

Among many other expreſſions of this Apoſtle equally ſtrong to the ſame point, I have ſelected the above, as it leads me to preſent you with an extract from a theological treatiſe of one, who on the ſcore of profound knowledge, and univerſal ſcience, was perhaps never equalled, even in theſe juſtly celebrated ſeats of learning; when I add the name of *Bacon*, it will not be thought that I have expreſſed myſelf too ſtrongly, nor was this Great Man leſs eminent for his piety, than for his other choice endowments, as his moſt Orthodox Confeſſion of Faith, his excellent work of the Pacification of the Church and his admirable Prayers abundantly prove: In his time there were alſo diviſions in the Church, it was then alſo the cuſtom with ſome to murmur againſt the eſtabliſhed doctrines of it, and it will appear, on nearly the ſame ground as at preſent.

This wiſe Man, in his treatiſe on Church controverſies, thus expreſſes himſelf:

" The fourth point, wholly pertaineth to
" them which impugn our preſent Eccleſiaſtical
" Government, who although they have not
" cut themſelves off from the body and com-
" munion of the Church, yet do they affect
" certain cognizances and differences, where-
" in they ſeek to correſpond among themſelves
" and to be ſeparate from others. And it is
" truly ſaid, tam ſunt mores quidam ſchiſma-
" tici, quam dogmata ſchiſmatica, there be as
" well ſchiſmatical faſhions as opinions: firſt
" they have impropriated unto themſelves the
" names of zealous, ſincere and reformed, as
" if all others were cold minglers of holy things,
" and prophane, and friends of abuſes. Yea,
" be a man indued with great virtues, and
" fruitful in good works, yet if he concur not
" with them, they term him (in derogation)
" a civil and moral Man and compare him to
" Socrates or ſome heathen Philoſopher;
" whereas the Wiſdom of the Scriptures teach-
" eth us otherwiſe, namely, to judge and de-
" nominate men religious according to their
" works of the ſecond table, becauſe they of
" the firſt are often counterfeit and practiſed
" in hypocriſy. So St. John ſaith that a man
" doth vainly boaſt of loving God whom he ne-
" ver ſaw, if he love not his Brother whom he
" hath ſeen, and St. James ſaith, this is true
" religion,

" religion, to viſit the Fatherleſs and the " Widow. So as that which is with them but " philoſophical and moral, is in the Apoſtle's " phraſe, *true Religion and Chriſtianity*."

Hiſtory has recorded the part that was acted by theſe impugners of the eccleſiaſtical government in the ſubſequent overthrow of their Country, nor ſhall I do more then obſerve, that the whole treatiſe, from whence this paſſage is taken, is infinitely worthy of your attention, applying moſt exactly in many other parts, beſides this which I have quoted, to the objections that are ſo confidently urged againſt the doctrines of our preſent Eſtabliſhment.

And ſurely when ſo much weight is allowed to authority, as has indiſputably been allowed, in this cauſe, *we* may well avail ourſelves of the ſanction of one who for upwards of two centuries, and amidſt ſo many various Nations, has ever been ranked amongſt the wiſeſt of the ſons of Men.

Having thus endeavoured to ſhew, chiefly from ſcripture, and alſo from high human authority, the indiſpenſable neceſſity of *enforcing* the doctrine of good works, and conſequently the want of judgement no leſs than of candour and charity in the impugners of our labours, I ſhall now proceed to a conſideration of ſome particular arguments on the ſame ſubject; and at ſet-

ting out, I muſt obſerve, that in the objections advanced to the mode of preaching, which is ſaid to prevail in the generality of our churches, there is this glaring fallacy, that the Objectors ſeem to take it for granted that *we* are addreſſing an Audience whom it is our buſineſs *to convert to the Chriſtian faith*; than which repreſentation, I will be bold to ſay, nothing can be more unfounded. What! *convert* to the Chriſtian faith thoſe who are already regenerate by Baptiſm, by Confirmation, who are already made, as our Church Catechiſm declares, *the Children of Grace:* but it is another leading fallacy of theſe Rebukers of others, that with the *praiſes* of our *excellent liturgy* ever in their mouths, they very *diſintereſtedly* ſtrip it of its moſt ſacred prerogatives. Again we are aſked whether ſuch poor moral diſcourſes as ours, would ever convert three thouſand Sinners at a time, like the ſublime effuſions of the Apoſtle, poured forth under the immediate inſpiration of the holy Spirit? to this queſtion we reply, as well we may, *Certainly not!* but we alſo reply, that in theſe days, *Converſion*, properly ſo called, however it may be the occaſional, is by no means the general office, of the Miniſter of the Goſpel. Thoſe who have been joining with him in the prayers of the Church, who have ſolemnly announced their allegiance to God the Father,

who

who have repeatedly acknowleged the mediatorial capacity of his bleſſed Son, who have proclaimed him for their *only Redeemer* and *Judge eternal:* who have on their bended knees beſought the preſence and aſſiſtance of God's holy Spirit to their pious offerings of praiſe and thankſgiving; perſons who have thus united with their Miniſter in the holy office of our Church, he conſiders,—can he do leſs?—As Believers, as in poſſeſſion of the true faith, in a word, as fellow Chriſtians with himſelf; and what remains, but that he be urgent with them in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, to ſhew forth that faith in the way which reaſon and ſcripture equally declare, to be alone profitable to ſalvation, namely, *by good works?* And is it for thus praying, for thus preaching, that we are ſubject to the harſh cenſure of *doling* out vain Philoſophy and beggarly Elements, nay more, of not preaching the Goſpel at all? But be it ſo, and may that Goſpel which we truſt we preach, and which God is our witneſs it is our moſt earneſt deſire to preach, be our conſolation.

Whoever indeed, hath ſeriouſly ſet himſelf to obtain a compleat and unprejudiced view of our book of common prayer, of which ſo large a proportional ſhare is ſelected from holy ſcripture, and which appoints ſtill additional portions from

from the ſame ſacred volume for each performance of divine ſervice; the whole inculcating, recommending from the fountain head, and repeatedly inſiſting upon every doctrinal point of our ſacred Religion—let me alſo add, the whole enforced by a form of prayer drawn up *with eſpecial view to the perpetual eſtabliſhment of thoſe points*——Whoever hath taken a fair eſtimate of the force and effect of ſuch a liturgy, will be under no apprehenſion *of any of* the doctrines of Chriſtianity falling into forgetfulneſs, even though we ſhould, for the ſake of argument, admit, that they are not on all occaſions ſufficiently brought forward as the *expreſs* groundwork of the preacher's diſcourſe—I ſay *expreſs* groundwork, becauſe it ſeems ſcarce poſſible that any Miniſter of the Church of England, ſhould be found either hardy enough, or weak enough, to recommend the practice of Morality on any *implied* principle, at variance with the Chriſtian code; nor can ſuch an accuſation, on negative grounds only, be urged without the moſt manifeſt breach of charity and juſtice.* The compilers and reviſers of our Liturgy muſt

* See in the Biſhop of Lincoln's "Chriſtian Theology" a quotation from Dr. Comber on the ſubject of our Liturgy: with ſuch a form of Prayer in conſtant uſe, it is hard to ſay how the peculiar doctrines of the Chriſtian faith *can* be treated with neglect.

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be allowed to have been fair judges of the nature and effect of their own work, and that *They* conſidered it as the *grand maſter key* for the *eſtabliſhment* and *tranſmiſſion* of the Chriſtian faith, is a well known fact: nor can we without juſt ſurpriſe and concern, ſee at this time revived the unſound pretenſion of placing the great ſtreſs of Religion upon *preaching only*, and that pretence made uſe of as a handle for cenſure upon the Eſtabliſhed Clergy: we have not forgotten the ruin that hath once already ſubverted this Country from ſuch and ſimilar beginnings, nor the monſtrous hereſies that from hence overran and corrupted *the Chriſtian* Church.

Again, I would aſk whether the generality of thoſe who offend againſt the divine laws, are guilty through *want* of faith, or of a ſerious conſideration of the dreadful effects of ſin and of a due controul over their paſſions; let the individual who has given his unfeigned conſent to the great truths of natural and revealed Religion inform us whether he is therefore ſinleſs? That the Scriptures do not conſider Faith as an all ſufficient ſafeguard from ſin, is manifeſt from the conſtant ſtreſs which is laid upon good works, and the ſtrict command to add to faith, good works. " As the body without the Spirit " is dead, ſo faith without good works is dead " alſo." " Every branch in me, (ſaith Chriſt) " that

" that beareth not fruit, the Huſbandman tak-
" eth away.

" This is a faithful ſaying and theſe things
" (ſaith the Apoſtle,) I will that thou affirm *con-*
" *ſtantly*, that they who have believed in God
" might be careful to maintain good works". If therefore wickedneſs in general, if the predominant ſins of the age, of the Community, and even of Individuals, be not marked out by the vigilant eye of their Spiritual Teacher, if the temporal and eternal miſery conſequent upon them be not ſet forth with the zeal and diſcretion, with the warmth and energy, which the intereſts of his Flock, and the charge he has undertaken are ſo well calculated to inſpire, where are men to look for the warning voice of inſtruction, to announce the ſhoals and quickſands of the voyage of life? Will it be pretended that they have only ſteadfaſtly to believe in the Saviour of the world, and that whatever be their deviations from the track of virtue that all will be well? This indeed would be to preach peace, peace when there is no peace.

But we know that this will not be *avowed*, that it will be ſtrenuouſly and indignantly denied: ſuch however, moſt unfortunately is the deluſive nature of the doctrine of Faith, as preached by the generality of thoſe who have ſeparated themſelves, *virtually* ſeparated themſelves

ſelves from their Brethren of the Church, that it is not only *calculated* to bear, but that we well know it actually *does* bear this meaning among their miſguided followers. Upon the whole, in addition to the above conſiderations, before we allow ourſelves to be alarmed into any material change of that mode of preaching, for which we conceive ourſelves to have ſo dedecided a warrant, both from the Goſpel of Chriſt, and alſo from the example of ſo many eminently pious preachers and writers of our Church, it behoves us very ſeriouſly to examine what and how great are the actual effects of *that method* which excluſively profeſſes to point out the way to Salvation. Here I would willingly reſt my cauſe, by their fruits ſhall ye know them: I ſpeak not of individuals, (who are loſt in the *Multitude* of thoſe who now claim our attention) but of the great body of the Diſciples of that method; are they diſtinguiſhed among their fellow Chriſtians, if they will permit us this fellowſhip, are they diſtinguiſhed by their remarkable indifference to the things of this world! by the purity of their moral habits! by their ſuperiority to all trick and cunning! by their freedom from all hypocriſy and deceit! above all, how ſtand they eſteemed for that virtue, without which all their profeſſions, (and

all ours too) are but as ſounding braſs or a tinkling cymbal; how rate they on the foot of Charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtue? When theſe queſtions are anſwered to our ſatisfaction is will be time enough to think of ſhaping our courſe by their directions.

But, it may be ſaid, do I preſume to argue from the compleatneſs of our Liturgy, that the great Doctrinal points of Chriſtianity are to form no part of our preaching, far from it, beſides particular occaſions which require that they make up the principal ſum of it; in every diſcourſe, they may, and ought, generally ſpeaking, to form the ground for the enforcement of the moral duties, and we affirm that he who neglects them, neglects a main incitement to the practice of virtue and holineſs. But we argue for a *fair diviſion* of the word of God; we argue, from the great compleatneſs of our Liturgy on the doctrinal points of Religion, that an ample ſhare of our *diſcourſes* ſhould be devoted to the recommendation of good works, no leſs than *Faith*, neceſſary to ſalvation.

But laſtly, we may obſerve, and it may be proved from the nature of the caſe, that it is ſcarce poſſible that any *Chriſtian*, who is arrived at years of *reflection*, ſhould be ignorant that faith in him whom he has acknowledged for his maſter

ter, is eſſential to ſalvation.* If therefore in the midſt of that deadneſs for ſpiritual things, which a life of pleaſure or of buſineſs is but too apt to generate, if the Preacher, well acquainted with the human heart, ſhould ſometimes turn his forces to the quarter where they *ſeem* to be the moſt likely to make impreſſion, if he ſhould occaſionally direct the warmth of his eloquence to the *temporal effects* of unrighteouſneſs; if he ſhould paint the worldly contempt that awaits upon loſs of character; the ruin that enſues from extravagance; the untimely death that ſnatches the Votary of unbridled pleaſure; if he ſhould call upon the Son, by all the ties of *filial reverence* to renounce the diſtructive profligacy of his ways; if he ſhould charge the *huſband*, the *father* by the *relative bonds* that nature herſelf has rendered indiſſoluable; if, in a word, earthly motives ſhould ſometimes be called in, where heavenly ones have ſeemed to fail, ſhould Chriſtian Charity take offence? ſhould it forthwith pronounce that the houſe of God is become a pagan temple? ſhould it not rather return again *in the ſure hope* (for ſo Chriſtian Charity teaches) of hearing thoſe doctrines,

* See a moſt eloquent ſermon of Dr. Barrow, on the Nativity of our Lord. Page 353, vol. II. fol. edit.

inſiſted upon, which it conceives to be better adapted to the ſole end of *all preaching*, that of rendering men better in this world, and eternally happy in the next ?

I have thus preſented you with a brief and, I am foremoſt to confeſs it, a defective ſketch, of a moſt important ſubject ; rejecting many arguments which I had propoſed to bring forward, and omitting many authorities of chief weight and importance, from the fear of intruding too long upon patience.

May *what* I have ſaid be ſufficient to excite the Friends of our eſtabliſhed Church to exert themſelves more effectually in the ſame cauſe.

The demand on their abilities is urgent : the rapid encreaſe of avowed Separatiſts from the Church is but too well known, and who is there can doubt a moment, that one, and perhaps the moſt fertile cauſe of this, is the diſunion which prevails in the Church itſelf ? A houſe divided againſt itſelf muſt at leaſt be pronounced to be in danger. It is in vain that the majority of the clergy exerciſe their ſacred functions according to the eſtabliſhed laws of their country, if it be proclaimed in every town, and almoſt in every village, that this majority neither preach, nor know, the goſpel of Salvation. I ſay it is not to be wondered at, if in this caſe, many of the Flock, doubtful to

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which of the two calls to attend, betake, themſelves to Guides and ways of their own.

We truſt however that it is far from being too late to avert, by perſuaſive modes, the impending evil. We cannot doubt but that it is through want of juſt repreſentations on the ſubject, that ſo many allow themſelves to be drawn from their Pariſh Churches to irregular, ſometimes to unlicenced, places of worſhip, and thereby contribute, (as far as in them lies) to the injury which accrues to Religion itſelf, as well as to the religious Eſtabliſhment of their country; of both which bleſſings, from the times of the Apoſtles to the preſent day, Unity, has been conſidered ever as the main Pillar.—

FINIS.